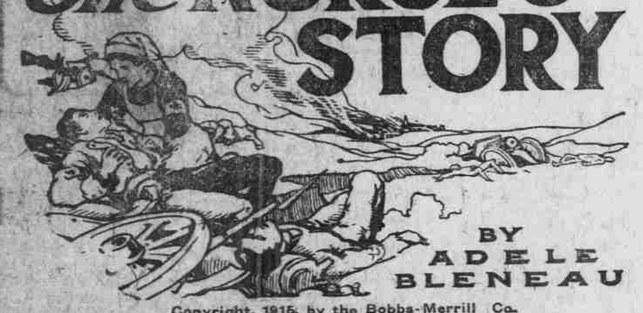
The NURSE'S STORY



BY ADELE BLENEAU

(Continued.)

I have tried to persuade myself that Von Schulling was delirious at the time and that he could not have done what he did in cold blood.

However this may be, Von Schulling marshaled his strength for a second time and suddenly tore off the bandages about his enemy's wound. Captain Frazer struggled with feeble strength to ward off the attack, but his efforts must have been pitifully weak, for Von Schulling's attempt was almost successful.

Downstairs something came to me, for the second time in my life, which I cannot explain by any human agency.

I was busy in one of the wards when, for no apparent reason, it was borne in on me that I must return at once to Captain Frazer's bedside. I have many times thanked the fates, or whatever guardian angel had me that day in its keeping, for bringing me that compelling message and for the fact that without stopping to reason I obeyed it, running up the stairs to the little attic room where my charges lay—an insistent premonition of danger knocking at my heart.

I burst into the room without knowing at all why I did so, but I am certain that I grasped the situation sooner for the impulse that had brought me there. Captain von Schulling stood by the Englishman's bedside with an expression on his face that I hope never to see again. Captain Frazer lay with a half contemptuous curl on his lips, vainly trying to rearrange the bandages.

The next few moments, as I look back on them, seemed to me like some awful nightmare. I know that I sprang forward and flung myself on Von Schulling, forcing him with unwonted strength back toward his bed. Fortunately for me, the man had only one arm that he could use, and fortunately for Captain Frazer, too, for it was this that saved his life. Although the Prussian fought me off like one demented, grinning with a kind of vindictive triumph that I am sure gave me added strength, it never occurred to me to call for help. With all my power I forced the man back inch by inch until at last I managed to fling him across his bed. I stood over him for a second as he tried to rise, then, with triumphant hate in his face, he fell back on his bed in a dead faint.

I left him and darted across the room to where Captain Frazer lay, drawn and white, but unafraid. With trembling fingers I crudely replaced the bandages. Once or twice I paused in the work to run to the door and call for help, but no response came.

While I struggled with the bandages I was utterly absorbed, and when at last they were in place and the danger for the moment passed I looked up to find Von Schulling sitting on the edge of his bed and staring at me with a half bewildered rage in his eyes that sent a shudder through me.

Suddenly from below a perfect pandemonium broke out, the sound of motorcars coming and going and the shouts and screams of men and women. Coupled with these came the dull thunder of a bursting shell, together with the hideous crash of high explosives.

I ran to the window to see what was happening and then, hearing a laugh and a curse behind me, turned to find Von Schulling locking the door. The man stood there for a moment, swaying in his weakness, and then, with a leer, said:

"Now I've got you both!"

And he threw the key out the window.

I remember thinking of the situation as merely absurd rather than dramatic, but a moment later I realized that his action was not the result of delirium, but that he had a very definite and pregnant reason for turning the lock at that moment. Just then the handle of the door rattled, and some one excitedly called my name. I sprang forward to answer, but as I did so the Prussian flung his one good arm about me and crushed me against his breast so tightly that I could not make a sound. I was almost suffocated. By the time that I had struggled free there came no answer to my scream, though I could hear footsteps racing down the stairs outside. I was alone with Von Schulling and Captain Frazer, who, I was thankful, had lost consciousness some moments before. Von Schulling again caught me by the arm and dragged me to the window, where I could scarcely credit the sight that met my gaze.

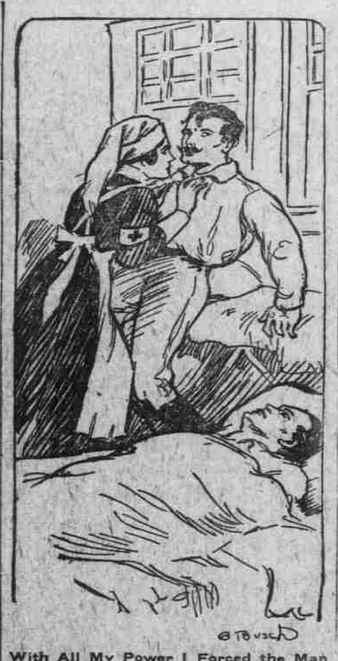
Swarming before the chateau and in long lines beyond were squadron after squadron of advancing cavalry. Von Schulling was beside himself, shouting and screaming like a maniac: "Welkomnen, meine kamaraden! Der Tag!"

Speaking in a tone that carried a note of unquestioned command, he called in German: "Stop! There is no key. Break the lock, but do not batter down the door."

The men on the other side must have recognized and accepted the tone, for they carefully obeyed, and a moment later the door swung open, disclosing half a dozen yellow uhlans from Stuttgart gathered on the landing outside. Then they parted and an officer, obviously a Saxon, stepped forward and surveyed us. With cool authority he addressed Von Schulling.

"Who are you, and who are these people?" he asked.

"I am Captain von Schulling of the Eighteenth ——. She, as you see, is a military nurse. And that fellow there," he added contemptuously, "is, I think, a dead Englishman."



With All My Power I Forced the Man Back Inch by Inch.

"What rank?"

I answered him quickly.

"He is Captain Frazer of the —— Sikh Indian army and is desperately ill. Have I your permission to attend him immediately?"

"Certainly, fraulein," he said. "Is there anything my men can do to help you?"

I was amazed at this kindness, and my eyes must have betrayed my thoughts, for he added quickly:

"You have nothing to fear, fraulein, from either myself or my men," and turning to Von Schulling, he said, "Are you able to come with me and make a report to the colonel?"

"Yes!" And slipping on his long military coat, together they passed out of the door and down the stairs. First, however—after a whispered remark or two from Von Schulling—the captain posted two men on guard outside the door.

With trembling fingers I set to work to readjust better the torn bandages and to bring Captain Frazer back to consciousness. Fortunately, God had blessed him with a constitution of iron, so it was not long before he opened his eyes. I did not speak. I waited to hear what he would say.

"Well," he said rather sadly, "our men have had to fall back. It must have been a pretty hurried retreat for such a thing as this to ha e happened, and all the while I have been lying here completely knocked out," and he muttered something that was suspiciously like an oath. "What has happened?"

"The Germans have advanced," I answered, "and are in possession of our hospital, but the officer who was here will treat us well, I am sure. He told me that we have nothing to fear. He asked who you were, and I told him."

"And I only woke up when it was all over," he smiled bitterly. "What's become of Von Schulling?"

CHAPTER XI.

Husband Hunting.

We were taken, Captain Frazer and I, to the largest German camp in that part of the country. The morning after my arrival I was escorted through the hospital by one of the officers in command by way of instructing me in my temporary duties.

The hospital itself was well equipped and well managed in every detail. There were patients of all kinds, wounded English, French and Belgians. Some were Belgian civilians who had been brought to this camp because of insubordination and had been interned promiscuously with the soldiers. It struck me, however, that they were all of age to bear arms.

I had heard many rumors of the great difference made by the Germans in the treatment of their prisoners, the English having always the worst of it, but candor compels me to state that in this particular hospital no favoritism existed. They all fared rather badly as to food, it seemed to me, for coffee or tea without sugar or milk for breakfast with one small slice of black bread, and a cup of soup for lunch, replaced from time to time by boiled chestnuts; soup and a small piece of bread at tea time, and no supper, did not seem a very liberal or suitable diet for sick men. However, both the doctors and nurses seemed to me quite conscientious.

A thing quite new and interesting to me was the camp itself, and I was always anxious to see really how the men were treated. My opportunity came one afternoon when I had been there a few days. I happened to be standing at the door at the moment the head surgeon started on his tour of inspection. He was a pleasant, kindly man of about thirty-five, who had shown me consideration on several occasions. Noticing me, he stopped and said:

"Fraulein, my interpreter is on sick leave today. Will you come with me on my tour of inspection?"

It was a command in spite of his way of putting it, but one that I was happy to obey.

First we entered the "quarantine pen," as he described it.

"Here," he said, "we keep all our newly arrived prisoners for a period of four weeks until we are certain they have no contagious disease."

I do not know how many were there, but certainly hundreds, as the tent covered perhaps two acres of ground. It was separated from an adjoining one by a barbed wire fence and a roadway eight or ten feet wide.

The head surgeon said to the men in German that any who were ill should come and speak to him, but warned them that he had no time to listen to imaginary complaints. He then had me repeat this in English and in French.

A comparatively small number came forward, and of them only one seemed sufficiently ill to need immediate attention.

He was an Irish youth. I could scarcely believe he was old enough to have been accepted for service. The moment he spoke I knew he was a gentleman. He was so ill I realized that the malady must have been developing for several days at least, and I quickly asked him why he had so neglected himself.

He looked up at me rather shyly and said:

"I would not have come today if you hadn't been here. The interpreter browbeats a fellow so. I'd rather have nothing to do with them."

He was sent at once to the hospital.

My idea, concerning him proved correct. He was a younger son of one of the best known Irish families, who, not being able to go as an officer, had, as have so many Englishmen of birth, gone as a private.

The surgeon rapidly passed on to the buildings. There were perhaps a dozen of these, low buildings of stained boards standing on brick foundations, each exactly like the other. I learned afterward that each was supposed to hold 200 to 225 men. They were heated by stoves and lighted by electricity, and the ventilation, I noticed, was excellent.

The mattresses lying on the floor were of striped ducking, filled with wood shavings about two feet thick. In the center of the room were long, narrow tables, at which the men ate, wrote and played games.

"Discipline here is maintained among the men," the surgeon said to me, with a certain pride, "by officers of their own nationality. Of course, if anything goes wrong we step in."

I had observed, however, that batteries of artillery were stationed at points of vantage here and there around the camp and that each building had lookout towers in which sentries mounted guard day and night.

By the time our tour was at an end it was suppertime, and I saw on all sides the prisoners cooking their own food. I remarked to the surgeon that the men were having vegetables as well as bread for supper.

"Yes, today," he replied, "but it is not a regular thing to have both, but at noon they have good soup, in which has been cooked meat, and vegetables and black bread."

Going out we passed the store. The printed price list was hung up. I noticed among the articles on sale, soap, brushes, shirts, towels, German dictionaries and French, English and German grammars. There was no food on the list.

The surgeon called my attention to the price of the German grammars and dictionaries. They were 6 cents each.

"You see," he explained, laughing, "how the general staff encourage the learning of our language," and then he added gravely, "for they hope it will lead to a better understanding of us, and so make for great good."

I could not resist the temptation to ask, "So you feel that to know the Germans is to love them?"

For a moment he did not know whether to be angry or to laugh. Perhaps I looked at him a little apologetically, which threw the balance in favor of the latter, for he smiled and said, "But I am afraid the knowledge of a language doesn't mean knowing the people, as many Germans know English"— and he left the sentence unfinished.

"And do the English know German?" I asked.

"Not many," he answered. "And those who do have learned it in order to read philosophy, literature, science —and there it ends. After all," he continued with characteristic German analysis, "my own opinion is that language cannot express good will unless it is already there, and if that is lacking the more closely two peoples come into contact the more likely they are to discover points of disagreement and ultimately to quarrel."

Germany undoubtedly made painstaking provision for every possible contingency arising out of a state of war. She even held yearly maneuvers at industrial establishments so that at a moment's notice they might, for example, turn from the manufacture of toys to the making of shrapnel. Yet vast numbers of her wounded found the medical organization unprepared. Perhaps that was due to the fact that the number of wounded far exceeded all expectations. However well equipped a country may be, it still remains a gigantic task to care for a million wounded, and that is what Germany had to do. Throughout that country, I was told, as in France, private houses, schools, university buildings and amusement halls were being turned into hospitals.

I was surprised to learn that German wolfhounds are used in helping the orderlies pick up the wounded on the battlefields. They have been of valuable assistance, as wounded men instinctively seek shelter and, owing to the protective coloring of their uniforms, are very likely to be overlooked by the searchers.

The men brought in from the front were washed, shaved and given fresh clothing. If a patient has received the iron cross or has been recommended for such distinction the fact is stated in large letters on a tablet attached to his bed.

(To Be Continued.)

BASEBALL BITS

When there is so much talk of reduced salaries for players it is interesting to read that the Pittsburgh club has voluntarily raised the pay of Pitcher Irving Kantlehner, in recognition of the good work he did last year. Proof that the square ball player will get a fair deal always.

Pitcher A. Rankin Johnson, who reverted to the Boston Red Sox when peace was declared, has been sold by that club to the Fort Worth club of the Texas League for a price said to be $300. Johnson, it was reported, had been tendered a contract for $150 a month, which he refused to sign.

The St. Louis American League club is likely to have Bobby Vaughn back on its hands, since he is reported as refusing to sign a contract with Portland, to which he was transferred. The St. Louis club agreed to pay part of his salary with Portland though this is against the Coast League rule.

Barney Reilly, former player with the Chicago White Sox and the St. Joseph Western League team, who quit the game to take up the practice of law in St. Joseph, is a candidate for mayor in that city on the Democratic ticket, and they do say he is the most popular man running and likely to be elected.

The Washington club has another pitching prospect signed. He is Kenneth McGovern, a southpaw, who is now going to school at Knox College, in Illinois. He had signed to play with Clinton of the Central Association. Nick Altrock discovered him and induced Manager Griffith to get him. He will report in June after college closes.

There is a lot of bunk being printed about changes in the size of the baseball diamond. As a matter of fact, the diamond hasn't been changed a particle. Yet is possible that a few diamonds have had the pitchers' plate wrongly located and that second base has not been stationed where it belongs, but these are the only corrections to be made.

While Jack Meyers is busy in the camp of the Brooklyn Dodgers taking off weight. Rube Marquard is seeking to take on poundage. Marquard for some reason unexplained has been falling off in weight the past couple of years until his strength has coon considerably impaired. In fact, ever since he took to vaudeville he has been wasting away.

Clark Griffith says he let Chick Gandil go because he smoked cigarettes. Gandil says he never could do his best for Washington because Griff made him train in the snow. Between snow and cigarettes the evidence seems to be against the snow, for there are a lot of players who smoke and make good, but mighty few who can train in the snow and deliver.

Six persons were injured when a New Haven passenger train ran into an open switch near Easthampton, Mass., striking two freight cars.

The Illinois Public Service Commission ordered the Alton & Atchison railroads to eliminate certain grade crossings at Joliet and to realign their tracks.